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GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS

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AT THE ESKIMO EQUIVALENT OF A QUILTING BEE, WOMEN SEW A SEALSKIN OVER A KAYAK FRAME

Eskimos are a jolly people and enjoy community activities. The men often fish in groups, paddling kayaks such as this one. These featherweight vessels, made of skins stretched tightly over a light wooden or bone framework, will carry a man through foaming rapids or across choppy straits. A small hole in the center of the top is left for the sealskin-covered *kayaker* to be laced into. Umiaks, larger, open boats, are used by the women to move family members and household goods. An estimated 30,000 Eskimos live in the Arctic lands stretching from Alaska to Greenland. This scene is on Hudson Strait, which connects the Atlantic with Hudson Bay (Bulletin No. 2).

GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETIN

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Tannu Tuva in Heart of Asia Becomes Part of U.S.S.R.

A LITTLE-KNOWN country listed as Tannu Tuva on the map and situated in the geographic heart of Asia has formally joined the U.S.S.R., and incidentally has taken its fourth name. Previously known as Tannu Tuva, or the Tuvinian People's Republic, it has become the Tuvinian Autonomous Region of the U.S.S.R. Bounded on the west, north, and northeast by Asiatic territories of Russia, and on the south and southeast by Outer Mongolia, it is now one of 11 autonomous regions included in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Earliest mention of Tannu Tuva is found in Chinese manuscripts of the 7th century A.D., where it is referred to as "Tuva." Conquered in 1207 by Genghis Khan, the ancient state became a part of Outer Mongolia and was known as Uriankhai until 1911. In that year during the Mongolian uprising in China, Uriankhai was claimed by Russia, which maintained a protectorate over it until 1914 when it once again fell into Chinese hands. In 1926 Uriankhai was proclaimed an independent republic under the name of Tannu Tuva.

Tannu Ola Mountains Separate Siberia-like Tuva from Mongolia

The country is about the size of Nevada. Its terrain presents a variety of tangled jungle, barren steppes, luxuriant meadows, forests, and mountains. Geographically, Tannu Tuva is much more closely akin to Siberia than to the arid regions to the south. From the Sayan Mountains in the northeastern part of the country, the Yenisei, one of the world's longest rivers, flows in a general northerly direction through Siberia more than 2,500 miles to the Arctic Ocean.

In the south, the Tannu Ola Mountains form a natural boundary between Outer Mongolia and Tannu Tuva. Spreading 350 miles east to west, the mountains are a series of gradual slopes and flat-topped summits whose highest elevation is 8,000 feet.

Tannu Tuva is governed by an assembly of representatives elected by the people. Everyone over 22 years of age is entitled to vote except members of noble and priestly families. The population of 90,000 in addition to Tuvinians includes Mongols, Chinese, and Russians.

Described as "the last stronghold of indigenous tribes of southern Siberia," Tannu Tuva was once peopled by nomadic Turkic tribes whose wealth was based on the number of reindeer they owned. Wandering in search of good pasture, they lived on game meat (seldom reindeer, which they considered an extravagance), herbs, mare's milk, and reindeer milk. Living in *yurts*—tents of felt stretched over circular wooden frames—the people had little to do but hunt and make clothing.

European Styles Are Replacing the Ancient Costumes

The men dressed almost entirely in skins, adding a leather belt, Russian knife, Mongol flint-and-steel, Chinese pipe, and Buddhist charm. High leather boots and an astrakhan cap completed the costume. In summer, Tuvinians wore blue cotton trousers and shirts, much like those worn by the Chinese coolie. Young girls dressed like the men, but married women were distinguished by their longer, looser garments. European clothing is becoming popular in the cities.

In 1930 the Russians standardized the Tuvinian language, using a Turkic alphabet. Before that time only lamas and nobles could read and write. In the

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George W. Hutchison

NEARLY THE WHOLE VILLAGE OF PALIN, GUATEMALA, COULD STAND UNDER ITS SPREADING CEIBA TREE (Bulletin No. 4)

travelers in low-slung sleighs over the narrow roads between settlements.

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Canada Plans Short Water Route to Europe via Hudson Bay

CANADA'S big Hudson Bay, discovered more than three centuries ago in a search for a northwest passage to India, is in the process of being "discovered" again. This time, the Canadian government is examining the bay and its approaches in a renewal of the search for a shorter northeast passage to Europe.

There hasn't been so much speculation concerning Hudson Bay since Henry Hudson discovered the great body of water in 1610. In 1611, mutineers placed the plucky mariner in a small boat with his son and set them adrift in the bay. What became of them is still a mystery.

"Bay" Compares with Seas in Size

Canada's west-east commercial lifeline starts at Vancouver in the extreme west, traverses the grain-producing prairies, funnels through to eastern Canada at Winnipeg, skirts the Great Lakes to Montreal, and reaches European ports by way of the St. Lawrence River seaway and the Atlantic Ocean. The route under study angles northeast from Saskatoon and Regina, wheat centers of Saskatchewan, to Churchill in northern Manitoba. From this port ships steam across Hudson Bay and through Hudson Strait to reach the open Atlantic. The latter route, more closely following a great circle, lops some 1,200 miles off the 5,195-mile course by way of the St. Lawrence.

Misnamed a bay, the frigid expanse of water named for Henry Hudson is really a land-enclosed sea nearly comparable in size to the Sea of Okhotsk. Its length north by south is 900 miles and its breadth is 600 miles. James Bay, a mere fingerlike extension to the south, compares with the larger of the Great Lakes. Hudson Bay is navigable from the middle of June to the end of October. It is obstructed by drift ice for the rest of the year. Numerous channels and narrow seas connect it with the Arctic Ocean—the famed northwest passage that has been threaded only three times in history.

In the past, development of Hudson Bay commercial routes was made difficult by ice hazards and by the fact that the mariner's compass is unreliable when near the North Magnetic Pole. Now, ships equipped with radar and gyroscopic compasses can surmount these difficulties. Without such scientific equipment, whalers have plowed through the icy water for years, but commercial vessels have been discouraged by high insurance rates.

So eager were early explorers to discover a northwest passage that they completely overlooked the immense wealth in natural resources that could be obtained from lands surrounding Hudson Bay. In the earth lay unknown quantities of coal, and iron and copper ores. There were also deposits of mica, slate, lead, zinc, silver, and gold. Fortunes in fur roamed the forests—moose, ermine, caribou, foxes, wolves, hare, deer, and bear. In the bay swam whales, seals, salmon, cod, and trout.

Port Nelson Gives Way to Churchill, 130 Miles North

It was not until "gentlemen adventurers" of the Hudson's Bay Company obtained their charter in 1670 that fur trading became a thriving business. Having discovered one source of riches the company little knew what tremendous power their charter gave them—"the whole trade of all those seas, streights, and bays, lakes, rivers, creeks, and sounds together with all the lands, countries, and territories upon the coasts and confines of the aforesaid." Charles II of England had no way of knowing how vast was this uncharted territory—30 rivers, countless

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past 15 years 180 books have been published in Tuvinian, and there are three newspapers and two magazines. The most popular publications are "wall newspapers" which are tacked up in public places for everyone to read.

Kizil Khoto, capital of Tannu Tuva, is being modernized with government buildings, shops, banks, and wooden houses. From Kizil, steamer service along the Yenisei River runs to Minusinsk and Kraznoyarsk in Siberia. A telegraph line connects the capital with Soviet cities.

Although sturdy ponies still serve as transportation on long journeys (illustration, below), automobiles are replacing horses, and half of Kizil's streets are paved. Tuvinians have learned to repair automobiles. Housewives sew and wash by machine. Radio loud-speakers blare in the streets. Motion pictures entertain the residents. A theater, established in Kizil, sends troupes of players all over the country giving performances in summer.

Popular recreations are wrestling and horse racing. On flutes, drums, trumpets, and two-stringed violins Tuvinians produce music described by travelers as melancholy and dolorous.

Under Soviet sponsorship, Tannu Tuva has been gradually changing from an agricultural to a commercial and industrial state. Relatively rich deposits of gold, silver, asbestos, and salt are being exploited. Many Tuvinians study mining engineering in Irkutsk in Siberia. Dams have been built to harness water power. Iron and manufactured goods are imported in exchange for hair, hides, and wool. The Tuvinians are being taught to farm efficiently, and to grow fodder for their livestock instead of searching for it. With the establishment of communities, communications, and transportation, nomadism is disappearing.

Note: Tannu Tuva is shown on the National Geographic Society's Map of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. A price list of maps may be obtained from the Society's headquarters, Washington 6, D. C.

Bulletin No. 1, January 7, 1946.

William J. Morden

ASIAN PONIES CAN TRAVEL WHERE A MOTOR MIGHT STALL IN THE SNOW

At the little town of Kosh Agach in the frontier region where Tannu Tuva and Outer Mongolia meet the farthest-south scallop into central Asia of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, winter comes early and plunges the thermometer to depths of 44 degrees below zero. Small stocky horses are the motive power which transports sheepskin-coated travelers in low-slung sleighs over the narrow roads between settlements.

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Problem Areas of Europe: 1. The Saar Territory

(This is the first of a series of nine articles about European trouble spots—areas whose forms of government and economic relations with neighboring countries may have to be determined by international negotiations.)

WITCHES' cauldron, powder keg—those were the labels the world used ten years ago to describe a small area in western Europe called the Saar Territory. Little more than half the size of Rhode Island, this spot held the possibility of war in 1935. But conflict was avoided when the Saar quietly joined the German Reich according to the decision of a plebiscite. Today, the end of the war with Germany and the coming peace conference again highlight the geographic and historic background of Europe's "shuttlecock of destiny"—the Saar.

The Saar is a natural coal basin. The productive core of the region centers about the coal veins whose inclined streaks underlie the southeast section of this area of low, wooded, sandstone hills. It is a territory of some 750 square miles situated where the rolling Rhineland hills merge into the Lorraine plain—near the point where Germany, the Duchy of Luxembourg, and France meet.

Supports 1,000 Persons per Square Mile

The Saar abuts nearly half of the irregular prewar France-Germany border between Luxembourg and the Rhine River—the half next to the little duchy. The region is given its name by the Saar River. The stream rises in Lorraine—where it is the Sarre—flows northwest close to the French frontier, and empties into the Mosel River near Trier.

Supporting a population of over 1,000 people to the square mile, the Saar is one of Europe's most densely populated and highly industrialized areas. Nature has placed rich veins of black wealth under the Saarland hills, and nine-tenths of the people were supported before the war by work in the mines or in the highly specialized industries which depended upon them. In prewar days, all but two small Saar mines were government-owned and operated.

This unique mining area has great natural beauty and charm, although the dust and din of industry are evident. There is no overall crowding of mills and tenements. It is one of the few places where forests of chimneys stand among live forests of trees. Saarlanders are a hard-working and stable people, with an attachment for the soil unusual among industrial populations. Nearly all workers own their homes with small plots of land, called *zwergbetriebe,* or "dwarf holdings," but the Saar normally imports food.

Since Roman days the Saar has been a natural highway through which flowed the course of history. Through the region Caesar drove blond Germans back across the Rhine, and ancient maps show military roads running along these winding valleys. Romans built a bridge across the Saar River, which gave Saarbrücken, the chief city and capital, its name. In modern times, two main continental railroad lines and five important highways follow this route.

Saar Question Nearly Wrecked 1919 Peace Conference

Caesar, Attila, Charlemagne, and Napoleon led conquering hordes across the Saar. Germany attacked France through the region in 1870, and soldiers of both world wars remember it well. Since Charlemagne's empire broke up in 843, the Saar has remained German for over a thousand years with but two short intervals—1680-1697, under Louis XIV of France; and 1792-1815, under Napoleon.

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lakes, all the Northwest Territories, most of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and Alberta—almost a third of Canada.

In 1927, Port Nelson on the bay's west coast was abandoned as a railhead for the proposed short cut to Europe. It was decided that Churchill, 130 miles northward, was in a more advantageous position to be a port and railway terminus. Now the chief port on the bay, it is connected by railroad to important commercial cities. In readiness for its potential position as one of Canada's most vital seaports, Churchill is supplied with a modern grain elevator, cattle pens, a power house, and an excellent water supply (illustration, below).

Three hundred miles on either side of Churchill stretch frozen, treeless plains. The temperature varies between 50 degrees above and below zero Fahrenheit. In warm weather Indians and Eskimos (illustration, cover) come to the settlements to trade, but vanish into the interior with winter's approach. Farther south, the shore line is forested, flowers grow, and vegetables are cultivated.

The east coast of Hudson Bay is barren and ice-locked. Because of the Belcher Islands in the southeast, sea currents coming in the Hudson Strait are diverted and flow to the west coast. This leaves the east coast with treacherous minor currents, made more dangerous by submerged rocks and blasting winds.

Since 1922 the Canadian government has maintained outposts in the Arctic region and along Hudson Bay. To facilitate navigation an accurate survey of Hudson Strait has been made. Tides and currents have been charted and direction-finding stations have been established. There is wireless communication from three bases—Port Burwell, at the Atlantic entrance; Wakeham Bay, halfway through the strait; and Nottingham Island, at the entrance to Hudson Bay. Ocean-going steamers can traverse the bay, as the depth averages more than 400 feet.

Shores of the bay are settled sparsely by Indians and Eskimos. There are no white settlements on the east coast. Missionaries have gained Canada's gratitude because of their success in educating and maintaining the health of the natives.

Note: Settlements, straits, and islands of the Hudson Bay region may be located on the Society's Map of Canada.

For further information, see "Canada's Awakening North," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for June, 1936*; and "Gentlemen Adventurers of the Air," November, 1929.* *(Issues marked with an asterisk are included in a special list of Magazines available to teachers in packets of ten for $1.00.)*

Bulletin No. 2, January 7, 1946.

Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau

HUDSON BAY DEEPLY GOUGES CANADA AND GIVES ITS WHEATLANDS A PORT

Connected with the prairie provinces by rail and with Europe's cities by water, the far-northern port of Churchill, Manitoba, envisions a prosperous role as a wheat transshipping point. Its grain-loading pier juts into the water at the left. To the right lies the main part of town, with the railroad leading to it. Ice restricts this harbor's use during eight months of the year. Churchill was named in 1686 for John Churchill, first Duke of Marlborough and ancestor of Britain's wartime prime minister.

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Trouble in Java Prevents Resumption of Rich Kapok Trade

JAVA, whose nationalist awakening and resulting unrest have prevented the island's resumption of kapok shipments to the United States, has long been the world's principal commercial source of this white, downy stuffing for life belts, life jackets, aviation jackets, mattresses, and pillows. Kapok—"tropical snow"—is also used in insulation and soundproofing.

The Netherlands Indies was the chief shipper of kapok to the United States, but not the sole source. Ecuador, the Philippines, the Dominican Republic, British East Africa, and Brazil were among prewar providers.

Ceibas Greeted Columbus with False Snow

Of the 10,500 tons imported into the United States in 1939, the Netherlands Indies supplied 9,225 tons valued at more than $2,000,000. Kapok is produced by the ceiba, silk-cotton, or kapok tree, as it is variously called, which grows in Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, New Guinea, and other islands of the group, as well as in Java. The last-named island exported more than all other world sources combined.

When Columbus reached the West Indies he found the ceiba trees, their white fluff giving the islands the appearance of tropical snow scenes. In aboriginal times the ceiba was sacred throughout a large part of Central America (illustration, inside cover). The Indians worshiped the tree, and under it elected their chiefs. In the plaza of Chiapa de Corza, in southern Mexico, stands a ceiba tree of pre-Cortesian times whose aged branches have often been desecrated by the hangman.

Some species of kapok trees, in the wild state, grow to great heights, notably in Surinam (Dutch Guiana, illustration, next page) and in French Guinea and Nigeria in Africa. Certain of these giants have very large trunks; one measured in French Guinea was found to be 20 feet in diameter.

In Java the relatively low trees facilitate the collection of the seed pods of kapok, which burst open in October and November. Under cultivation the trees are slender and less than 50 feet high. The natives climb the trees to pick or bite off the dry pods, which are from four to six inches long, and not more than two inches thick, with the kapok fiber fastened to the inner walls of the pod.

The United States First Imported Kapok from Java in 1900

Growing from sea level to 2,500-foot altitudes, the trees of Java begin to produce when four years old. So light is kapok that the several hundred pods on a tree contain only forty or fifty pounds of the "silk." The large split-bamboo baskets of kapok carried by men, women, and ponies look like back-breaking burdens.

Java early took the lead in kapok production. Exports began in 1880, but did not reach sizable volume until the beginning of the century. The first United States shipments from Java were made in 1900. Just before the First World War, Java and Madoera had about 69,000 acres of kapok, exporting ten thousand tons a year.

By 1936 United States imports from all sources had reached a total of 15,000 tons. In September of that year the Kapok Establishment Ordinance of the Netherlands Indies made it necessary for exporters to obtain licenses and pay controlled prices to growers for standard qualities of kapok. United States imports

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The question of what to do with the Saar nearly wrecked the 1919 peace conference. Clemenceau wanted outright annexation to France, but was strongly opposed by Woodrow Wilson and Lloyd George. At one point, because hope of agreement seemed lost, Wilson ordered the *George Washington* readied to take him home, but a compromise was reached.

A "phantom state," a "legal accident," was created, a tiny state governed by a League of Nations commission of five men. France took ownership of the mines; the Saar was to use French currency and be within the French customs union. In the 1935 plebiscite, 90 per cent of the votes were for reentry into the Reich. Germany later bought back the coal mines. The first territorial addition to Hitler's original Reich pointed the way to other, less peaceful acquisitions.

The Saar is German in race, speech, culture, and traditions. Under its wooded hills lie an estimated nine billion tons of coal, which makes this tiny place well worth having. Five-sixths of the iron used in the Saar's mills came in prewar days from across the French border, from the vast deposits of Lorraine ore. From 1919 to 1934, when France owned the coal mines, many coking plants were built in Lorraine to use Saar coal. The two areas dovetail economically and commercially. During the recent war, the Saar produced six per cent of German coal and over ten per cent of Nazi iron and steel.

France, with an annual coal deficit of 25,000,000 tons, is coal-hungry. The Saar's annual prewar output of 13,000,000 tons is a rich prize. Although the Saar was the scene of desperately destructive fighting in the winter of 1944-45, the coal mines are reported to be in good condition. The Saarland, along with most of the rest of the Rhineland, is now under control of French occupation troops. Factories and mines are reopening.

Note: The Saar appears on the Society's Map of Germany and Its Approaches.

See also "What Is the Saar?" in the *National Geographic Magazine* for February, 1935*; and "The Industrial Saar, Like the Ruhr, Is Prize of Modern War," in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, December 18, 1944.

Bulletin No. 3, January 7, 1946.

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Geo-Graphic Brevities

WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND'S CAPITAL, CONFUSED WITH CANBERRA

A UNITED States Senate committee, hearing charges of confusion in foreign affairs, found evidence of confusion in geography. One witness testified that when he was in Wellington, the capital of the Dominion of New Zealand, cables for him were sent to Canberra, the capital of the Commonwealth of Australia—1,220 miles away across the Tasman Sea.

Founded in 1839, Wellington has been the capital of New Zealand since 1864, when the islands had the status of a colony. According to the latest estimates the city has a population of more than 160,000—second only to Auckland with its 225,000 residents.

American travelers have described Wellington as being as windy as Chicago, as hilly as San Francisco, and as landlocked as Seattle in its location on the inner shore of a busy, deep-water harbor of 20,000 acres.

So hilly is the city's site that the residential section rises in terraces for three hundred and four hundred feet above the downtown area. Level land is so scarce that many home seekers have literally had to carve their homesites out of the steep slopes; and some business establishments stand on land reclaimed from the bay.

Note: New Zealand is shown on the Society's Map of the Pacific Ocean.

For further information, see "The Making of an Anzac," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for April, 1942; and "New Zealand 'Down Under'," February, 1936*.

* * * * *

NEW MAP OF JAPAN AND KOREA SHOWS SHRUNKEN EMPIRE

SHRUNKEN Japan stripped to virtually the same territory it had when Commodore Perry sailed into Tokyo Bay in 1853 is shown on the National Geographic Society's newest war map, Japan and Korea—a ten-color chart which is a supplement to the *National Geographic Magazine* for December, 1945.

The 47 prefectures of Japan are in contrasting colors so that they may be easily identified. Railroads and main highways are shown. If and when G.I.'s are permitted to travel in Japan, the new map may be used to plot their projected tours, and their relatives and friends at home may follow their routes.

Tankan Bay, take-off spot for the Pearl Harbor attackers, is shown in the southern Kuril Islands. Several large-scale insets on the map "blow up" small but important areas. Okinawa with Buckner Bay, a new geographic name born of World War II, occupies one inset. Formosa, Tokyo Bay, and the Pescadores—important spots in the Pacific campaign—are similarly dealt with. Another inset shows Karafuto, the Japanese half of Sakhalin Island.

The map uses Japanese names in Korea since they are better known and U. S. Navy charts carry them. As many Korean names as possible are also shown.

* * * * *

NICARAGUA'S NEW PORT OF SOMOZA RECALLS '49 GOLD RUSH

PUERTO SOMOZA, Nicaragua's new port of entry on the Pacific coast, is north of San Juan del Sur where thousands of "forty-niners" embarked for the California gold fields. After sailing from New York or other east-coast ports, the gold-seekers crossed Nicaragua by boat up the San Juan River and through Lake Nicaragua, thence by stagecoach over a 15-mile road to the Pacific port.

San Juan del Sur and the northern port of Corinto were long Nicaragua's

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fell to less than half the 1936 figure, and the volume has never been fully restored. The Netherlands government organized a corporation, the Kapok Fund, to withhold excess stocks from the market.

Kapok trees in the Philippines produced several thousand tons of the floss, but it was limited to local use, and most of it was permitted to waste. The trees border fields and highways and produce kapok equal in quality to that from Java, but the islands long lacked suitable cleaning machinery, and low prices retarded early development of trade. In 1939 the Philippines shipped more than 250 tons of kapok to the United States.

Bulletin No. 4, January 7, 1946.

W. Robert Moore

U. S. SOLDIERS, PERCHED IN A TREE THAT PROVIDES KAPOK FOR AVIATION JACKETS, GUARD MINES PRODUCING ALUMINUM ORE FOR MAKING AIRPLANES

In Surinam (Dutch Guiana) on the north coast of South America, this giant ceiba tree towers above the forest and affords a commanding view of the territory around the Moengo bauxite mines, 55 miles east of Paramaribo. During the war, the United States helped the Netherlands protect the valuable deposits. Java ceibas, from which most commercial kapok normally comes, are much smaller than this jungle giant festooned with lianas. The fiber-producing pods are found at the ends of branches.

principal Pacific ports, and the only harbors having rail connections inland. Puerto Somoza, named for Nicaragua's president, is about midway between them.

A short rail connection with Diriamba, 15 miles inland, will put the new port within easy reach of Nicaragua's capital and largest city, Managua; the tobacco market, Masaya; and Granada, largest port on Lake Nicaragua.

Most of Nicaragua's 1,000,000 people live along the mountainous Pacific coast where the elevation and lakes afford some relief from tropical temperatures. Through this section passes the Pan American Highway. Both railway and highway systems are largely confined to the western half of the country.

South of Puerto Somoza is the coastal town of Brito (illustration, below) which has figured in surveys as the Pacific entrance to the proposed Nicaraguan ship canal.

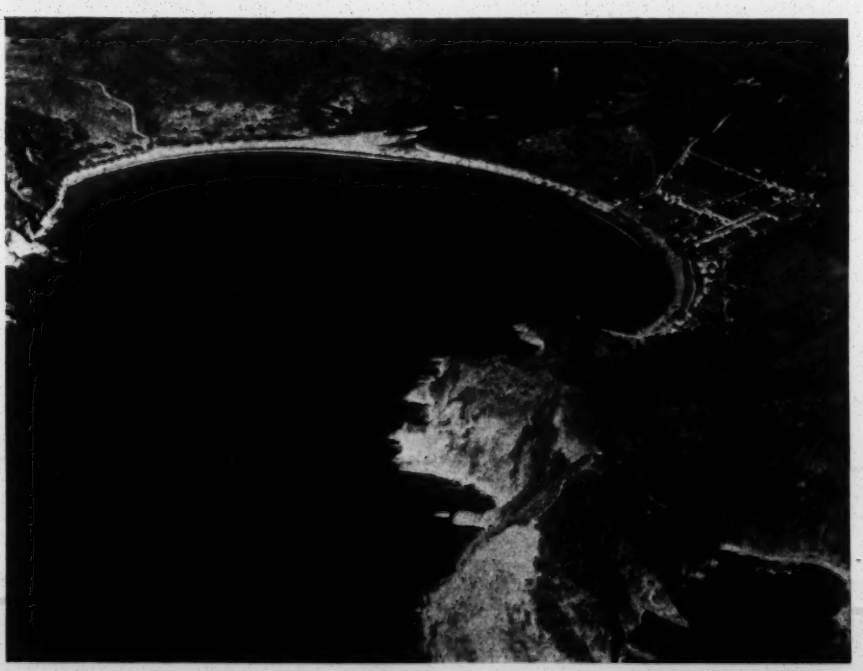
Nicaragua's west coast, extending 160 miles in a southeasterly direction, is backed by volcanic peaks and mountain ranges, with many hills crowding the shores and presenting steep cliffs to the pounding surf. Volcano Viejo is only 16 miles inland; and Volcano Ometepe, rising from Lake Nicaragua, is 23 miles inland. They are two of Nicaragua's tallest peaks.

Note: Nicaragua is shown on the Society's Map of Mexico, Central America, and the West Indies.

For additional information, see "A Land of Lakes and Volcanoes," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for August, 1944*; and "An Army Engineer Explores Nicaragua," May, 1932*.

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, April 5, 1943, "Nicaragua of the 'Great Lakes'."

Bulletin No. 5, January 7, 1946.



U. S. Army Air Corps

IF AND WHEN A NICARAGUAN CANAL GOES THROUGH, BRITO MAY RIVAL BALBOA

Once destined to become a busy port at the Pacific end of the proposed Nicaraguan Canal, Brito, a few miles southwest of new Puerto Somoza, remains a sleepy village at the southern curve of an oval bay scooped out of Nicaragua's west coast. From the northern edge of the village a road ribbons across the Rio Grande and over the hills in the direction of the Pan American Highway, 10 miles to the east. In the foreground, Brito Head thrusts its sprawling, forested bulk into the ocean and shelters the harbor from southwestern storms.